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Sen. Stamas' 'Jessica's Law' to protect children from sexual predators signed into law

LANSING – Legislation to help protect children throughout Michigan from sexual predators was signed into law Tuesday, said state Sen. Tony Stamas, R-Midland.

“Parents across Michigan can take solace in knowing that this Legislature is committed to protecting children,” Stamas said. “Having this law on the books will provide those in our judicial system with one more tool to help safeguard our children from sexual predators that wish to do them harm.”

Sponsored by Stamas, Senate Bill 709 (along with SBs 717 and 718) requires repeat offenders convicted of criminal sexual conduct in the first degree to serve a life sentence without a chance of parole if their victims were under the age of 13.

Earlier this month Mark Lunsford, the father of Jessica Lunsford, a 9-year-old Florida girl who was kidnapped, raped and murdered by a convicted sex offender, came to Lansing to testify in support of legislation to protect children.

Lunsford has traveled around the country as an advocate for tougher child sex offender laws.

The legislative package would also provide a minimum of 25 years in prison with lifetime parole for anyone 17 years of age or older convicted of sexually assaulting a child under the age of 13.

Stamas' bill is Public Act 165 of 2006.

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Editor's note: A photo of Sen. Stamas and Mark Lunsford is available on the Senate Majority Photowire at:

<http://www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/photowire/Stamas/Stamas.htm>